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Illinois Department on Aging

Governor Rod R. Blagojevich
Director Charles D. Johnson

April 20, 2004

Aging Wins Grant to Streamline Information System

News about long-term care services will soon be easier to access, the Illinois Department on Aging today announced, thanks to a three-year grant that has been awarded to the Department.

One-Stop for long-term-care help

The \$800,000 federal grant to support the Department's development of aging and disability resources centers in Decatur and Rockford came from the Administration on Aging and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The development of "one stop" resource centers in these two communities will permit IDoA to study the feasibility of establishing similar centers throughout Illinois.

"Older people and their families in Illinois will be able to learn about the services and supports available at one place, a resource center with all the information about community based services," said Charles D. Johnson, director of IDoA.

"At a time when families face the stress of illness and disability, they need a trusted source of information about all of the options available, and how to access those options. A single source of information will minimize confusion, and will show our respect for the right of families to make the best choice based on the best information.

"Now our Department can offer Illinois families a place to turn," Johnson said, "We will be there when they need us."

The options for long-term-care, Johnson said, include in-home services, as well as care in nursing facilities. Consumers make choices based on medical need, and the Department on Aging can help families look at the all options available and make appropriate choices.

A single, coordinated system of access for people who want long-term support was set as a priority for the Department when Johnson was named director by Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich last year. "We have been working for the past year to re-balance long-term-care service in Illinois," Johnson said. "During the past 12 months, we have opened the door to our Community Care Program by raising the asset cap on eligibility, and we have adjusted reimbursement rates to support services to the frail elderly at home and in adult day-care-centers. This is just another step in the right direction."

Illinois was one of 12 states that won the new grants. Others who met the standards to establish Aging and Disability Resource Centers are Alaska, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, New Mexico, North Carolina, Northern Mariana Islands and Wisconsin. Another 12 states won similar grants in September 2003 to develop streamlined access to long-term support services under the program.

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